

## Message Text

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46

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 IO-13 EUR-25 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 AID-20 RSR-01 /141 W

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R 271200Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9222

INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 5925

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IS

SUBJECT: THE 1973 ELECTIONS: GAHAL LEADERSHIP AGREES TO SEEK  
EXPANDED ALIGNMENT

1. IN UNEXPECTED MOVE JOINT HERUT AND LIBERAL LEADERSHIPS IN GAHAL ANNOUNCED JULY 26 AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO PROPOSAL ARIEL "ARIK" SHARON TO UNDERTAKE FORMATION NEW OPPOSITION ALIGNMENT. GAHAL LEADERS MENAHEM BEGIN AND ELIMELECH RIMALT WILL ASK STATE LIST, FREE CENTER AND INDEPENDENT LIBERAL PARTIES PLUS OTHER PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS TO ENTER ALIGNMENT. PURPOSE NEW CENTER-RIGHT ALIGNMENT TO FORM ENLARGED ELECTORAL FRONT AGAINST LABOR PARTY-MAPAM ALIGNMENT.

2. ARIEL "ARIK" SHARON, FORMER GENERAL SOUTHER COMMAND, PROVIDED CATALYST FOR ALIGNMENT PROPOSAL. SHARON ANNOUNCED RETIREMENT FROM ARMY JULY 11 FULFILLING ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT THAT ARMY OFFICERS MUST RETIRE FROM OFFICE AT LEAST 100 DAYS BEFORE ELECTION DAY TO RUN ON KNESSET LIST. AT PRESS CONFERENCE JULY 17 SHARON ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO SEEK CREATION EXPANDED ALIGNMENT -- GAHAL, FREE CENTER, ILP AND STATE LIST -- TO OPPOSE LABOR PARTY-MAPAM ALIGNMENT.

3. ON JULY 18 EZER WEIZMAN ANNOUNCED HE WOULD RUN ON GAHAL LIST ONLY IF AGREEMENT REACHED TO FORM NEW ALIGNMENT.

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SHARON LEFT OPTIONS OPEN BUT CARRIED OUT CONSULTATIONS WITH HERUT

AND LIBERAL PARTY LEADERSHIPS. AT YESTERDAY'S PRESS CONFERENCE SHARON FORMALLY JOINED LIBERAL PARTY AND GAHAL EXECUTIVE. HE WILL BE GIVEN GUARANTEED PLACE KNESSET LIST.

4. BEGIN'S AGREEMENT TO INITIATE CONTACTS FOR CREATION NEW ALIGNMENT CONSTITUTES GENUINE SURPRISE. TEL AVIV POLITICAL CIRCLES HAD ALL BELIEVED THAT PERSONALITY DISPUTES, PARTICULARLY LONG STANDING RIVALRY BEGIN AND FREE CENTER LEADER SHMUEL TAMIR, WOULD BLOCK SHARON'S INITIATIVE.

5. WHETHER NEGOTIATIONS WILL SUCCEED REMAINS TO BE SEEN. INITIAL REACTIONS TAMIR AND STATE LIST LEADER HOROWITZ POSITIVE. ILP MINISTER MOSHE KOL STATED IN TV INTERVIEW THAT IDFFERENCES BETWEEN MODERATE STAND ILP ON TERRITORIAL SETTLEMENT IN MARKED CONTRAST TO GAHAL'S "NOT AN INCH" MILITANCY MAKES ILP ENTRY NEW ALIGNMENT UNLIKELY BUT ILP EXECUTIVE MUST DECIDE. PARTICIPATION SOME INDIVIDUAL ILP MEMBERS CANNOT BE EXCLUDED.

6. COMMENT. WHILE PROPOSED ALIGNMENT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE THREAT TO CONTINUED LABOR PART RULE, INCLUSION ATTRACTIVE PUBLIC PERSONALITIES SHARON AND WEIZMAN WILL ENHANCE APPEAL NEW FORMATION. SINCE LISTS MUST BE SUBMITTED 45 DAYS BEFORE ELECTION, PARTIES HAVE UNTIL MID-SEPTEMBER TO ATTEMPT HEAL OLD WOUNDS. PROBLEM WILL BE HOW TO PLEASE ALL CONCERNED WITH ALOCATION OF PLACES ON KNESSET LIST.  
BUTTON

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